

turn a blind eye to waste in the Defense Department.

The Defense Department is a gigantic bureaucracy, in fact, the biggest bureaucracy in the world. It has the same problems and inefficiencies of any giant bureaucracy; and conservatives, especially fiscal conservatives, should not give a free ride to waste, fraud and abuse just because it is done by the Defense Department.

Counting our regular defense appropriations bill, plus emergency and supplemental appropriations bills, plus the military construction appropriations bill, plus the end-of-the-year omnibus appropriations bills, we spend more on defense than all of the other Nations of the world combined. Yet the military, like all other bureaucracies, always wants more money.

Well, at some point, we are going to have to decide, do we want national defense for our own people, or are we going to be the policeman of the world and provide international defense for all countries that claim to be our allies?

With a national debt of almost \$9 trillion and unfunded future pension liabilities of many trillions more, I believe it is both unaffordable and unconstitutional for us to try to be the policeman of the world. We will soon not be able to pay Social Security and veterans' pensions with money that means anything, and all of the other things the Federal Government is doing, if we try to maintain an empire around the world.

Conservatives have traditionally been the biggest critics of interventionist foreign policies because they create so much resentment for us around the world.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, conservatives have traditionally been the biggest critics of nation building, as President Bush was when he ran for the White House in 2000. We need the more humble foreign policy he advocated then, or we need to tell the people to forget about their Social Security because we are giving blank checks to the Pentagon.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order today.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

BLUE DOG COALITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, I rise on behalf of the 44-member-strong, fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, as we demand from this Government fiscal accountability as well as fiscal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, as you walk the halls of Congress, it is easy to know when you are walking by the door of a fellow fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition member, because you will see this poster as a welcome mat to his or her office to remind Members of Congress, to remind you, Mr. Speaker, to remind me, and to remind the American people and all of those who walk the halls of Congress, that the U.S. national debt today is \$8,696,414,214,377.65.

For every man, woman and child in America, their share, our share, my share of the national debt is \$28,900.92. That is a big number.

A lot of people think, well, it really does not matter what the debt is, our Government can simply print more money. I wish it was that simple.

Our Nation today is spending the first half a billion dollars it collects in taxes not to improve veterans' health care, to protect our troops, to build roads, to fund health care, to protect Social Security and Medicare, to ensure the 47 million folks without health insurance have access to it. No. The first half a billion dollars that we collect every day in taxes from the hard-working people in this country go to simply pay interest, not principal but interest, on this number, the national debt.

And those which should be America's priorities will continue to go unmet until we get our Nation's fiscal house in order. This is something that affects every man, woman and child in America. We have a plan, a 12-point plan for budget reform to ensure that we can live within our means, that we can pay down this debt and restore fiscal discipline and common sense to our Government.

One of those 12 points, by the way, Mr. Speaker, is what we referred to as PAYGO rules, which means pay as you go. And I am real proud that the leadership under this Democratic Caucus in the first 24 hours, not 100 hours, but the first 24 hours, the Democratic leadership reinstituted PAYGO rules on the floor of the House. Which means, quite simply, if you want to fund a new program, you got to show us where the money is coming from.

Now the Republicans tend to think that that means that to fund new programs you raise taxes. I find it quite interesting that the Republicans think that PAYGO, pay as you go, means raise taxes to pay for new spending. It does not mean that. It means cut programs. It means make the tough choices to put an end to the waste in Government.

I got some 8,000 brand new, fully furnished mobile homes sitting at the airport in Hope, Arkansas, that were des-

tined for Hurricane Katrina storm victims but never reached them. That is \$400 million right there.

We are not talking about raising taxes to pay for a new program. But I can tell you what we are talking about, Mr. Speaker. We are talking about putting an end to the days of the Republican leadership borrowing money from China to fund a new program creating this large number, making it go up daily. It is still going up nearly a billion dollars a day under the Republican budget that was approved last year.

No more of that, Mr. Speaker. No more borrowing money from China to build a rain forest in Iowa. We are demanding that you show us how you pay for your projects and your programs. We are going to restore fiscal discipline and accountability to our Government.

This week, the President came out with his budget; and we will be visiting more about the President's budget during this hour.

But another thing that the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition is doing is we have gotten together and we have written and endorsed what is referred to as House Resolution 97. And House Resolution 97, we have 39 cosponsors. It is providing for Operation Iraq Freedom cost accountability.

Put quite simply, we are demanding accountability on how your tax money, Mr. Speaker, and the tax money of the hard-working people of this country is being spent in Iraq. You ask 100 different people what they think about this Iraq policy, you will get about 100 different answers. You will find some Members of the Blue Dog Coalition that are for the surge, some are against. I am against the surge. I think the American people want us to go in a different direction in Iraq.

But one of the things that unites us as a coalition and the things that we have endorsed and that we have written and we are trying to put in place is House Resolution 97, which has four crucial points that demand fiscal responsibility in Iraq.

Point number one, a call for transparency on how Iraq war funds are spent. The American people are sending some \$9 billion a month to Iraq. That is about \$12 million an hour. And the American people in this country that work hard and pay taxes deserve to know how their money is being spent in Iraq.

Number two is the creation of a Truman Commission to investigate the awarding of contracts. It is time, Mr. Speaker, to put an end to war profiteering in Iraq.

Number three, a need to fund the Iraq war through the normal appropriations process. Play by the rules. No more of this so-called emergency supplemental appropriations to hide from the American people the true cost of the war.

Finally, number four, use American resources. This is America. We are the leader of the free world, and we should